

PROPOSAL PAPER

Independent Technical Panel on Demand Management Measures Final Report on California Landscape Water Use 10-27- 2015 Draft

Section #9 *(From the current draft outline)*

Section Title: Public Perceptions and Social Norms *(From the current draft outline)*

Recommendation #1: Defining Professionals, recognition of examples of low water use landscapes and a sustainable statewide approach to outreach and information.

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Background:

During its investigative process and discussions with horticulture industry professionals and public officials the ITP found a significant lack of information into the process and procedures to locate and hire the correct level of professional for residential landscaping. The differences between landscape designers, Landscape Architects, Landscape Contractors, garden centers and irrigation professionals is typically not known or clear to homeowners in need of ~~professional~~ landscape services. Often and unknowingly, homeowners turn to unlicensed operators using cost as the determining factor. The end result is often unacceptable and ends in water being wasted and with no recourse for the homeowner. It is also clear from listening to ITP members that there needs to be easily obtained local/regional examples of landscapes designed, installed and managed for low water use. Furthermore, a methodology for a sustainable (long term) approach to educate and outreach to residential property owners with respect to designing, installing and managing low water use landscapes is lacking as well.

Recommended Action:

The definitions, roles and requirements of and for landscape professionals should be made easily available to homeowners in order to provide them with informed choices when considering landscape services. Examples of well designed and correctly installed low water using landscapes should be available, easily obtained and recognized on a local level. The WUCOLS website and plant list should also be readily available and easy to use

Proposal:

The state Department of Water Resources will convene a stakeholder group to work with the University of California, Davis, California Center for Urban Horticulture, , CUWCC and other stakeholders to create an educational campaign for homeowners that identifies the variety of professional horticulture services available in the marketplace. The campaign will also identify and make available to homeowners examples of properly designed and installed low water use landscapes for each of the state's climate zones. Included in the campaign will be information on how homeowners can access and utilize the WUCOLS plant list. Initial steps include:

1. Invite representatives from horticulture stakeholder groups (landscape designers, architects, and contractors), UC, irrigation manufacturers and brokers, nurseries (wholesale and retail), water agencies, industry trade organizations and consultants.
2. Identify services performed by each type of landscape professional.
3. Identify process to obtain examples of low water use landscapes.

4. Identify user friendly platform to access WUCOLS.
5. Consider the role of and how to defend against “the underground economy.”
6. Develop metrics to evaluate residential type of work for current professionals. Identify who typically does what and what is working, what is not working and where the gaps are in the different roles.
7. Develop process to provide local examples of low water use landscapes (Houzz, Instagram, Facebook).
8. Develop marketing campaign to promote WULCOSs plant list and its use.
9. Select the criteria for creating the information and identify how to best disseminate (e.g. through the realtor community, water agencies, cities, retail garden stores, etc.).
10. Develop an implementation plan that includes a timeline for program roll-out, a list of deliverables, roles and responsibilities, and impact evaluation to measure effectiveness.